

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested. Claims 1-3 and 5 are pending. Claims 1 and 2 are amended, and claims 8 and 9 are added.

Applicant appreciates the allowance of claim 2 if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 2 has been amended to include all of the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims. Therefore, claim 2 is allowable.

Claims 1 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Strobel et al. Claim 1 is amended to recite that said first and second friction elements are positioned such that they are able to connect said belt spool and said coupling disc with each other with a friction fit after a vehicle-sensitive locking of said belt spool (12) so that the belt (12) can entrain said coupling disc (32) to terminate the locking of said belt spool (12). Strobel et al. does not disclose or suggest this feature.

By contrast, the friction clutch 42 of Strobel et al. operates to limit the belt force when a vehicle occupant exerts an excessive load on the belt when the belt spool is locked (see column 4, lines 5-10 and Col. 4, lines 42-65). The friction clutch 42 of Strobel et al. is not intended to terminate the vehicle-sensitive locking of the belt spool. Therefore, claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 3 and 5 depend from claim 1 and are therefore allowable as depending from an allowable claim and for the specific features recited therein. Claims 4, 6, and 7 are allowable and should no longer be withdrawn since they depend from an allowable generic or linking claim. Claims 4, 6, and 7 should also be allowed for the specific features recited therein.

New claim 8, which depends from claim 1, should be allowed for the same reasons as claim 1 and also for the additional feature that the termination of the locking of the belt spool is initiated by a rotation of said belt spool in winding direction of said safety belt. Neither Strobel nor any of the other prior art discloses or suggests this feature. Therefore, claim 8 is allowable.

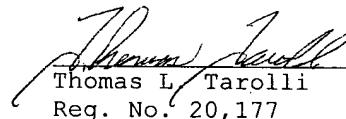
New claim 9 recites a belt retractor for a vehicle safety belt, comprising a belt spool rotatably mounted in a frame, a coupling disc rotatably mounted relative to said belt spool, which with a rotation relative to the belt spool can bring about a locking of a rotation of the belt spool in unwinding direction of said safety belt. The belt spool has a first friction element and the coupling disc has a second friction element. The first and second friction elements are positioned such that they are able to connect the belt spool and the coupling disc with each other with a friction fit after a vehicle-sensitive locking of the belt spool causes the belt spool to entrain the coupling disc and rotate the coupling disc in a direction to release the first and second friction elements. The locking occurs due to rotation of the

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belt spool relative to the coupling disc which causes a coupling disc portion to actuate a locking catch, and movement of the locking catch causes rotation of the coupling disc and disengagement of said first and second friction elements. None of the prior art discloses or suggest all of the features in claim 9. Therefore, claim 9 is allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the amendment be entered and the application allowed. Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,


Thomas L. Tarolli
Reg. No. 20,177

TAROLLI, SUNDHEIM, COVELL,
& TUMMINO L.L.P.
526 Superior Avenue, Suite 1111
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-1400
Phone: (216) 621-2234
Fax: (216) 621-4072
Customer No.: 26,294